

Open Access Policies in Scotland and the UK

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Outline

- Open access policies – what are they?
- Open access policies – why?
- Policy landscape in the UK
- Funding body mandates
- Scottish Open Access Declaration
- Institutional policies in Scotland
- Institutional policies in the UK as a whole

Open access policies – what are they?

- Generally policies put in place by a funding body, by an organisation, by an institution or by a discrete part of an institution
- Specify how an organisation expects authors (as grant holders or employees of an organisation) to engage with open access
- Some policies take the form of ‘mandates’. i.e. a requirement to make publications available in an open access manner

Open access policies – why?

- Recognition by organisation/funding body that it is important for publications produced by authors associated with them to be as freely available as possible
- Additional recognition by organisation/funding body that majority of authors are unlikely to do this voluntarily (not because of opposition, but because open access is not a priority)

Policy landscape in the UK

- UK has been at the forefront of open access policy development by funding bodies
- Wellcome Trust most forward thinking UK funder in this respect
- Research Councils UK (RCUK) have also been involved in significant policy making in this area
- Country wide open access statement in Scotland
- Some individual open access mandates at UK universities

Policy landscape in the UK – important landmarks

- Government inquiry into scientific publications led by House of Commons Science & Technology Committee (2004)
- Contributions from academics, publishers, librarians
- Committee in favour of greater access to scientific literature, but government response was weak (no major policy change recommended)
- Followed by RCUK consultation exercise in 2005

Wellcome Trust developments

- Wellcome Trust very positive about concept of open access
- Largest private funder of medical research in the UK
- Announced the development of an open access policy in November 2004
- Policy implemented in October 2005 – requires grant holders to make their published outputs available in the UK PubMed Central repository
- Wellcome provides funds for open access publication charges

Wellcome Trust statement

‘The mission of the Wellcome Trust is to foster and promote research with the aim of improving human and animal health. The main output of this research is new ideas and knowledge, which the Trust expects its researchers to publish in high-quality, peer-reviewed journals.

The Wellcome Trust believes that maximising the distribution of these papers - by providing free, online access - is the most effective way of ensuring that the research we fund can be accessed, read and built upon. In turn, this will foster a richer research culture.

The Wellcome Trust therefore supports unrestricted access to the published output of research as a fundamental part of its charitable mission and a public benefit to be encouraged wherever possible.’

RCUK developments

- UK Research Councils instigated consultation on open access in 2005
- Initially hoped that all councils would implement the same policy
- Outcome was that each council was allowed to adopt its own policy
- Majority have since implemented an OA policy that requires deposit in an OA repository, but some differences in implementation of policies

Other UK funding bodies

- OA policies have also been developed by other funding bodies in the UK
- Most significant are medical related funders e.g. Cancer Research UK, British Heart Foundation, Arthritis Research Campaign etc.
- These funders have generally followed a similar model and require deposit in UK PubMed Central

Scotland

- Part of the UK
- Devolved Scottish Parliament since 1997
- Devolved powers include education, health, prison service etc. dealt with by Scottish Executive
- ‘Reserved powers’ (mostly about matters with a UK or international impact) dealt with by UK Parliament in London
- Universities and libraries in Scotland work closely together

Scottish Open Access Declaration: background

- Growing interest in OA in Scotland
- High level event organised in October 2004 by senior representatives of Scottish university libraries
- Attended by representatives of Scottish universities, research funders, the Scottish Higher Education Funding Council and the Scottish Executive

Scottish Open Access Declaration

- Event resulted in Scottish Open Access Declaration, which was signed by representatives of those attending
- Full declaration available at <http://scur.ac.uk/WG/OATS/declaration.htm>
- Included actions for different organisations attending

Actions for research funders

- Require as a condition of grant that publications resulting from funding are available on open access, either by means of self-archiving or through publication in an open access journal.
- Allocate funds for fees for publication within research grants.
- Encourage traditional research publishers to offer open access publishing streams with fair pricing.

Actions for universities/research institutions

- Set up institutional repositories, and/or liaise with other organisations to establish a joint repository.
- Encourage, and where practical mandate, researchers to deposit copies of their outputs (articles, reports, conference papers, etc) in an institutional or co-operative repository.
- Encourage, and where practical mandate, the deposit of PhD theses in an institutional repository.
- Review intellectual property policies, to ensure that researchers have the right and duty to provide an open access version of their research.

Actions for Scottish Executive

- Recognise the benefits to society as a whole of wide access to knowledge.
- Endorse implementation of open access within broader initiatives such as Smart, Successful Scotland and Openscotland.
- Take a leading role by working with other national governments in promoting open access.

Outcomes of declaration

- Renewed interest in open access in Scottish institutions
- Issuing of policy statements, e.g. Glasgow issued a statement on open access ‘strongly encouraging’ staff to deposit their publications in Enlighten, our institutional repository
- Led institutions to start thinking about implementing mandates

Mandates in Scotland

- Scotland led the way with electronic theses mandates at Robert Gordon University, St. Andrews University, Stirling University, the University of Edinburgh and the University of Glasgow
- These were followed by mandates for the deposit of research publications at Stirling University, Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh and the University of Glasgow

Mandate ('Publications policy') at Glasgow

- Implemented in September 2008
- Requires academic staff to deposit the full text of peer-reviewed, published journal articles and conference proceedings into Enlighten, where copyright allows, as soon as possible after publication.

OA policies at UK institutions

- Institutional mandates at some other UK institutions
- University of Southampton was first institutional mandate in the UK
- New mandate has just been announced at University of Cardiff
- Mandates being considered by a number of UK universities

Mandates: the way forward?

- Demonstrate the significance organisations attach to open access
- Perhaps better seen as ‘policy’ rather than ‘mandates’
- Actions required are not too onerous for academics
- May not be needed once open access is even better established, but critical at this point in time in the development of open access

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